

Personal Protection Equipment and Clothing

Keep It in Good Condition

I'm not going to preach about wearing protective equipment and clothing. You wouldn't work without it, any more than a baseball catcher would dream of going into a game without his glove, mask, and body protector.

But I am going to talk to you about making sure your equipment is in good shape. So that you won't have a false sense of security, like a non-swimmer floating off into deep water on a leaking inner tube.

It's Usually Safety Testing, but....

Reliable manufacturers test their safety equipment before they sell it. And, it usually exceeds the required standards. But if you alter the equipment or don't replace it when it's worn, you're figuratively heading into deep water with a dangerous leak.

To give you an example: Hard hats were supplied to a crew doing some clearing. One of them admired the strong nylon lace in the cradle of his hard hat and removed it to make a fancy key chain.

He replaced the nylon with a piece of cotton string. A dead limb fell off a tree and struck his hard hat. The cotton string broke, the cradle collapsed, and his skull took the full force of the blow. He was killed instantly.

Is Your Equipment Worn or Torn?

The dangers of altered or worn equipment not only apply to hard hats but to other items as well. Take gloves, for example. Do they offer as much protection when they're torn or coming apart as they do when they're in good condition? The answer obviously is "No." Or what about shoes? A pointed, sharp object can easily pierce or cut through a worn sole.

Even a small pebble can cause a nasty bruise. In addition to strong soles, shoes should have hard toes and good uppers. Safety shoes with steel toes give the best protection. And don't let laces that are too long trip you up. Either cut them off or tuck the excess length in your boots.

Cuffs, Loose Clothing and Jewelry

Beware of cuffs and loose clothing. They can get snagged on something or caught in machinery. Don't wear overalls or pants with cuffed or rolled up legs. If legs are too long, have them cut off and hemmed. Watch out for loose shirt sleeves and flapping shirt tails. Keep jackets buttoned or zippered shut at least chest-high. Watch out for jewelry. It can catch on things, too. Don't wear loose watch chains or straps looping from a button hole to a bib pocket. Keep rings, wrist watches or other jewelry in your pocket or in some other safe place. You've probably heard about rings getting caught on things and tearing off fingers.

Is Your Protective Equipment "Working"?

So remember. You not only have to wear protective equipment, but you have to be sure you're wearing it properly and that it's in good condition. Like the ad for the deodorant says: "Make sure it's working."

Date:	Company Name:		
Project Number/Name:	Meeting Location:	Person Conducting Meeting:	

Items Discussed:

Problem Areas or Concern:

CREW SIGN-OFF

Supervisor: _____

Date: _____

Crew Members: _____

Crew Members: _____

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